

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

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FOLLOWING REPEAT HONG KONG 1186 ACTION SECSTATE 31 JAN

QUOTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE HONG KONG 1186

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP

SUBJECT: GAO REVIEW OF CONSULAR PROTECTION OF AMCITS DURING
EMERGENCY

REF: STATE 021095

1. CONGEN WELCOMES REVIEW OF TWO-MAN AUDIT TEAM FROM GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE. SUGGEST, HOWEVER, THAT FEBRUARY 10 STARTING DATE BE CHANGED. ON FEBRUARY 11, 12 AND 13, HONG KONG RESIDENTS CELEBRATE CHINESE NEW YEAR, THE MOST IMPORTANT HOLIDAY OF THE YEAR. DURING THAT TIME, VIRTUALLY ALL ACTIVITIES NOT CONNECTED WITH NEW YEAR'S COME TO A STANDSTILL. GOVERNMENT OFFICES, CONGEN AND OTHER CONSULATES, COMMERCIAL ORGANIZATIONS, SHOPS, AND MOST RESTAURANTS CLOSE DURING THAT PERIOD. MOREOVER, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, IS AMERICAN AS WELL AS HONG KONG HOLIDAY. THEREFORE, GROUP SHOULD PLAN TO ARRIVE TO BEGIN WORK FEBRUARY 18 OR THEREAFTER AS MEETS ITS OWN REQUIREMENTS.

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2. GAO TEAM MIGHT WANT TO RECONSIDER PROPOSED LENGTH OF VISIT

IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT CONGEN CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR PROTECTION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS DURING EMERGENCIES ARE LONG-STANDING, ORGANIZED AND CURRENT. MOREOVER, VISA AND OTHER CONSULAR OPERATIONS WERE THOROUGHLY INSPECTED BY DEPARTMENT OF STATE INSPECTION TEAM HEADED BY AMBASSADOR G. EDWARD CLARK FOR THREE-WEEK PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 2, 1974.

3. WE ALSO PRESUME THAT DEPARTMENT AND GAO ARE AWARE THAT GAO TEAM VISIT WOULD HAVE TO BE HANDLED WITH EXTREME CARE. HONG KONG REMAINS IN STATE OF CALM, AND ANY PUBLIC INFORMATION ABOUT PURPOSE OF THIS VISIT IS LIKELY TO CAUSE SOME CONFUSION AND CONCERN ABOUT WHAT SITUATION IN HONG KONG REALLY IS IN OUR VIEW.

4. PLEASE ADVISE ASAP.

CROSS UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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